UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE ISSUE

EDWIN T. BUEHRER, *Guest Editor*

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CURTIS W. REESE, *Editor*

CONTRIBUTORS

E. Burdette Backus: Minister of All Souls Unitarian Church, Indianapolis.

Ralph E. Bailey: Minister of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee.

Raymond B. Bragg: Minister of All Souls Unitarian Church of Kansas City, Missouri.

Edwin T. Buehrer: Minister of the Third Unitarian Church of Chicago.

Frederick May Eliot: President of the American Unitarian Association.

Randall S. Hilton: Executive Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference.

Charles H. Lyttle: Minister of the First Unitarian Society of Geneva, Illinois.

Maurice B. Visscher: Professor of Physiology, University of Minnesota.

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THE FIELD

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion"

Right for Aliens Upheld

An important decision defining the rights of aliens has been handed down by the U.S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia. It holds that under the Passport Act an alien is entitled to a full and fair hearing before permission to leave the country can be denied him.

The case involves Han-Lee Mao, a Chinese student who had finished his studies in this country and wished to return to his native land. Mao was defended by Washington attorney Jack Wasserman.

Mao came to this country in 1947 as a temporary visitor under the sponsorship of the then Nationalist Government of China. He studied at the University of California and Scripps Institution of Oceanography. In 1951, he applied for reservations on the American President Lines for himself, his wife, and infant daughter.

He was then called in to talk to an Immigration Inspector, subsequent to which he was denied permission to leave the country because he has "scientific knowledge and training" which "might be utilized by Communist China." During his interrogation, he was not advised of his right to have counsel.

The refusal was made under the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, which continues the emergency powers of the Passport Act to deny exits of aliens during a declared state of emergency. A U. S. District Court judge sustained the action.

In reversing this decision, the Court of Appeals affirmed Mao's right to seek the fair hearing guaranteed under the Fifth Amendment. Said the Court of Appeals:

> "We do not think that the court intended, by using the word 'permanent' . . . to hold or imply that a resident alien, in order to be entitled to Fifth Amendment protection, must intend to spend his life here. The statement was carefully worded to fit the case in hand and was not intended, we think, to limit constitutional protection to an alien whose residence is permanent in the strictest sense of the word."

—*ACLU Bulletin.*

UNITY

VOLUME CXXXIX NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1953 No. 4

EDITORIAL

Dear Mr. Eisenhower:

You have it within the power of your decision to go down in history as one of the greatest of our Presidents—along with Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt, or as one of the greatest failures—along with Ulysses S. Grant and Warren G. Harding. And there is not much time left in which you must make your decision. You can become the leader of the liberal forces within both major parties and outside of both parties, or you can become the tool of the reactionary forces of the country. At present the cards are somewhat stacked against you. You were unfortunate in your choice of a vice-presidential running mate. You accepted the support of McCarthy, Jenner, Velde, and others of their kind. You have overloaded your cabinet with Big Business in a way that no other President ever dared to do even in the heyday of Republican power. You have made some grave mistakes, such as supporting the rape of the Tidelands, and by describing the TVA as "creeping Socialism," when even your Majority Leader, a much more conservative man than you are, has given big praise to TVA. But with your still vast popularity you can yet overcome these handicaps if you will. I have too much respect for your integrity to suggest that you should be influenced by recent election returns. The determining decision must be made in the inner recesses of your own soul and on the basis of profound conviction on what is good for the country. Believe me, Mr. President, the dominant trends in the country and throughout the world are in the direction of what your reactionary hangers-on decry as the Welfare State. It may very well be that what is good for the country is good for General Motors, but it does not necessarily follow that what is good for General Motors is good for the country. Come forward, Mr. President, in the next session of Congress with a forward-looking, socially motivated program of legislation. Dare to keep taxes up and expenditures down, to expand and increase social security benefits, to support Federal Aid to education, to give the farmers protection equal to that given Labor and Industry, to encourage health insurance, to preserve and strengthen civil liberties, and to make more secure the future of the United Nations. Move in these directions and the forces of history move with you. Move against them and you and your Administration are doomed to ignominous defeat. Your place in history is at stake, and I wish for you the wisdom to make the decision that will make you great.

Patriotically yours,

Curtis W. Reese.

Organized Unitarianism and the Fight for Intellectual Freedom*

MAURICE B. VISSCHER

This Conference has been in the past a vital factor in the maintenance of the American Unitarian Association as a sanctuary for free religious thought. The influence of the West has been great in maintaining the integrity of the Unitarian tradition. When others were willing to succumb to the temptation to freeze the mould of Unitarianism within a theistic creed, the Western Conference led the battle to preserve complete freedom of conscience as the Unitarian position. Free religion exists in America today at least in part because this Conference fought to preserve it.

There are unfortunately still forces in American Unitarianism which would bar from the Association those who do not find the postulate of a personal God necessary to their philosophic view of the universe. Unitarianism is as yet not completely clear as to its basic philosophy. There are still voices raised to protest that religion without a God is a contradiction in terms, that Humanism is non-religious. But the current leaders of American Unitarianism are fortunately strong in their view that the historic genius and mission of Unitarianism is to provide an organizational frame within which the rational Theist and the rational non-Theist can join hands in a common quest for strength — strength to build a movement of thoughtful men and women who are determined to assist the human race in its struggle to throw off the shackles of religious superstition and intellectual intolerance which have bound much of it for thousands of years. Unitarianism was founded in protest against dogmatic unreason, it grew because it filled real needs in human lives. It can grow much more vigorously if it will fill those real needs more effectively.

Fellow Unitarians, we owe it to ourselves and to our contemporary society to look coldly and without blinding pride at the state of Unitarianism today. Our organization has indeed grown somewhat in recent years, but it is still a group of such small dimensions that its voice is like a whisper against the great roar of noise that deafens the ears of the American people. Less than one thousandth of the people in the land are members of Unitarian organizations. This in spite of the predictions of Thomas Jefferson, a hundred and fifty years ago, that within a generation a majority of Americans would embrace its tenets. Obviously Mr. Jefferson was a better patriot than a prophet.

The Challenge to Unitarianism, Still Unmet

Obviously the Unitarian movement has not successfully met the challenge of the twentieth century in American society. Our small numbers and our inadequate influence are proof that this is true. And I believe that we are not successful because we—all of us —laymen and clergymen alike have failed in two major areas. We have failed to restate adequately the principles of Unitarian thought and tradition in terms relevant to mid-twentieth century society and—perhaps more important—we have failed to use the modern media of mass communications effectively. We have not, as an organization, used 1953 methods of telling our story. We have not created in the public an informed interest in the matters of the mind and the sensitivities of the conscience.

I hope that you may be willing to bear with me while I develop these two thoughts. I believe that when you have considered these problems you will agree with me that they are central, not only to the welfare of American Unitarianism but more importantly to the survival of a free society. I trust that you may also agree with me that we ought to do something about the problems, and that the Western Unitarian Conference should return to its traditional role of leadership in the forward thought and action of the Unitarian movement.

First, then, what are the needs of mid-twentieth century America in religious leadership? What is the genius of Unitarianism in the context of the problems of 1953 in America and the world? Billy Graham says that the world needs only to get back to the Bible. The Vatican says all will be well if men and women everywhere accept its authority in matters of faith and morals. James Fifield and his Spiritual Mobilization groups are crying that what we need is simply a return to God's Law, which they define in a very special way. These are the loud popular voices of religion on the American scene.

They are all voices of various brands of authoritarianism in religion. They rest on the authority of the written word or of the established church, or both. They are the voices of anti-intellectualism. They are one and all servants of the cause of traditionalism as opposed to progress. They would shackle the mind by bonds which most men have been unable to break.

These popular religious movements all have at least one tenet in common; they deny that the scientific method has validity in dealing with the larger human problems of the world view. They reject human reason and the methods of thought used in the scientific enterprise when one approaches the ultimate questions of man and his world. Thus the authoritarian religions of every shade are, and must be, anti-intellectual in an ultimate sense.

This is not a new situation; and it would not be of such immediate relevance were it not for the fact that in America in 1953 a crisis situation exists in which anti-intellectualism is taking additional forms and acquiring power which it did not have in recent times. The two large interrelated factors in this changed situation are modern technology and the current social upheavals in the previously underdeveloped parts of the world. These upheavals are transmitting their shocks, like earthquakes, to the rest of the world. Let no one delude himself into thinking that they are simply political, in a narrow sense. They are cosmic in the sense that large forces related to the modern technological society have induced them. No history has yet been written which traces the story of the real impact of science and its applications upon the human race. Such a history would of necessity be itself a scientific study of the consequences of invention and discovery and their exploitation upon human life in all its phases. One can see now only the dim

*An address given at Western Unitarian Conference Banquet May 2, 1953.

and obscure lines of such a history, but it is clear enough for us to conclude beyond significant danger of error that technology is a major key to wealth and production, which in turn determine political and military power, which again in turn fix the course of history. For example, the United States is a large world power factor today, not because of great population, for it does not have the great numbers of people; not because of mineral resources or land, for other weaker nations have as much or more; not because of any superior intelligence, for there is no credible evidence that an average American has better brains than an average Oriental. The only plausible reason for mid-twentieth century American power is technological development, utilizing the scientific discoveries and inventions of the Western world. Popular education of technicians and scientists at all levels has probably had more to do with American power than any other factor.

The Current Drives Against Non-Conformity

The world situation with regard to political military power has put America into a stressful situation and has given domestic influence and authority to groups which probably would never have had such power in the absence of those stresses. To be specific, the anti-socialist agitation, the drive against religious non-conformists, the activities of all sorts of super-patriotic organizations—these and related activities are all made important by one coincidence. That coincidence is that they can all be related by one or another trick of sophistry to our national safety and defense. Thus it happens that intellectual freedom, including religious freedom, is in jeopardy today for the reason, in the last analysis, that modern science and technology are disturbing world equilibrium.

One further point is crucial in this connection. The very rise of modern technology has given demagogues and sophists—through radio, television, newspapers, magazines, motion pictures, and cheap books—means of mass propaganda that they did not have before and without which they could not do their sinister work.

What has Unitarianism to do with all this? Simply that the world—especially the American part of it—has lost its philosophic rudder in this storm, and Unitarianism could, if it were able to overcome its inertia and get into motion, provide the intellectual leadership to develop a philosophy adequate to our times.

We in America today are living through a sordid period. If we are to survive as a nation of free men we must stop the march of clericalism, we must stop the denial of freedom of opinion, we must stop the process of extra-legal suppression of thought and discussion. What are we doing to stop the inroads of clericalism? To illustrate what I mean let me remind you that it was a responsible official of the Catholic University in Washington, D. C., who gave Senator McCarthy his list of a hundred and fifty so-called sex perverts, spies, saboteurs, etc., in the State Department. So far as I have been able to ascertain no verified instance of espionage has come out of this wholesale slander. Let me remind you, too, that it is the Roman Church that censors our books, our films, our magazines, and that often stands in the way of appropriations for our schools. Anyone who has read the Blanshard books knows about the devious ways of clerical influence.

What is Unitarianism doing about a basic defense of freedom of thought and expression in academic institutions? In religion itself?

What are we doing? We are, to be sure, fighting valiant fights in lone combat. I refer to dozens of our ministers and hundreds of our laymen. We are passing laudable resolutions at our meetings and trying to make our voices heard. We have published some excellent material in the *Christian Register,* but too large a share of that magazine has been given over, in the last several years, to strange sorts of material. For example, it gave much space to an FBI agent to tell Unitarians about his life history as an undercover man and how shocked he was to find the Communist Party represented in the Boston social register. We have an article saying, correctly I believe, that a convinced authoritarian Communist is not apt to be a good scholar, which said nothing, however, about the comparable unfitness of a religious authoritarian. These and other things we have done may all be decent and interesting. But Rome is burning and why should we play Nero's role? I do not wish to blame anyone but ourselves—rank and file Unitarians—for our inaction. We have given our officers no mandate to act. I suggest that we should do exactly that now.

The great need today is for responsible organizations which will provide the ideological, moral, and financial support for a new fight for freedom of the intellect. Unitarianism could and I believe should be the leading movement in this struggle. It is a religion *of* freedom and *for* freedom. It cannot live *without* freedom. To orient itself to mid-twentieth century problems it must pay attention to the real threats to freedom in its environment. It must not be diverted by the false thrusts and feints of its adversaries. It is the technique of demagogues seeking power to divert attention from real issues to spurious ones. When politicians and clerics make unfounded charges against a hundred or more State Department employees, they do so not to protect the country, but to capture the Department of State. The real issue is their power. The spurious one is their false charge.

The New Fight for Freedom

These and other actions of the infringers of freedom are all camouflaged under the blanket of patriotism and defense against treason. The fact that the methods employed are themselves treasonable against the very principles of a free democracy is lost sight of completely in the noisy clamor that the traitors against human decency and democracy make. The whole structure of freedom is being threatened by clerical and political authoritarian groups who are using the menace of Communism as a smoke screen for their own machinations. Of course Communism might be a danger to freedom in this country. Of course Russian expansionism is a threat to world peace. Of course we must see to it that real American interests are not sabotaged by unpatriotic people. But in saying so one does not say that to avoid a Russian dictatorship one should embrace an American brand of Fascism. This is, however, precisely what is in danger of occurring. We, Unitarians, are helping it along. I have no objection to the publication in the *Register* of articles pointing out the existence of a possible threat to freedom in America from extreme left-wing movements. But why do we not publish proportionately ten times as much material about the threat, which is ten times or more as imminent and real, from the clerical and political anti-democratic forces. So

far as any verified information exists we have had one member of Congress who was a Communist. We have had a few, maybe half a dozen, in Executive Departments. But how many clericalists and political enemies of freedom have we had and do we have today in positions of enormous power and influence? Our Congress and Executive Departments are in danger of being dominated by them.

My point is that we are being "sold a bill of goods" by a group of would-be Fascists in America. We are being led to accept political and religious thought control under the guise of being protected against a horrible but less probable danger. We are complacently accepting the real fact of one kind of slavery in order to escape the possible danger of another. And Unitarianism has not provided the effective stand of leadership, especially against the clerical elements in the Fascist philosophy in this conspiracy, which one might expect it would.

The World Struggle for Men's Minds

Battles for world power are not fought without clear thinking. The world struggle today is for men's minds. The Vatican and the Kremlin are past masters in the art. Where are we in this conflict? We are patting ourselves on our collective backs because the Beacon Press dared to publish Blanshard's books. But have we called a conference of all religious liberals to map out the strategy or a war against the rising tide of clerical Fascism in this country? No, we want to be tolerant. Tolerant of all opinion and belief we should, of course, be. But tolerant of attempts of clericalists to infiltrate and dominate the Department of State for the benefit of one church? No! Tolerant of the very successful attempts of the mis-named Legion of Decency to dictate our diet of movies, radio, and literature? No! Since when has tolerance toward would-be dictators been a virtue?

The Vatican and the Kremlin are clear about their aims. Their power philosophy is well-formulated. Their tactics are carefully planned and their partisans are as unscrupulous as they are loyal. Their acts are justified by ends which to them permit the use of any possible means.

We are estopped from using their methods by our conviction that the means to ends are vitally important. We cannot condone dishonest or otherwise immoral means to desired ends. But we do have weapons left to us.

The human being has, so far as we know, only one crucial distinction from the rest of the animal kingdom. He has the power of reason. This power has brought man a long way from his primate cousins through his million-year history, and it is still the best hope for mankind. It is true that man's actions are usually immediately motivated by factors which come in the category of emotion or feeling, rather than pure reason, but the fact remains that in the background reason plays a large part in the process. Emotions themselves are largely determined by experiences and intellectual processes related to them. The Vatican, the Kremlin, McCarthy, Velde, and their ilk are using millions upon millions of words to try to influence men's minds and emotions. Their obvious successes demonstrate that words do influence mass attitudes.

And here is where we come in. If the human race is not to go through another eclipse of freedom of thought comparable to that of the thousand years we call the Dark Ages, it seems that some group must light a new torch to illuminate our own age. We may say in false pride that we live in an Age of Enlightenment. But in reality we live in an age of technology based upon tremendous progress in technical knowledge supported on a foundation of general intellectual quicksand. The structure of our civilization in America is fast slipping into this quagmire because there is no organized structure to prevent it. Individual strong beams cannot support a weight unless they are united in a structure built for the purpose. The dozens of Unitarian clergymen who are fighting lone fights against the encroachment of the forces of darkness and slavery deserve all credit and praise. They are heroes. But heroes do not win wars unless by their acts they give whole armies courage to fight. What we need today is a structure of resistance. We need to sink deep shafts of reinforcement into the abyss of ignorance in modern society so that our superstructure of free civilization will not disappear.

To shift from metaphor to reality, we need to have a modern mechanism to win men's minds and emotions for intellectual freedom. We need to recognize clericalism and super-patriotism as the incubus of American Fascism. And we need to use the tools of mass media of communication to tell that story. We live in the age of radio, television, motion pictures, mass circulation magazines and pocket books. We do not live in the age of the town meeting, the chautauqua, and the country squire. The minds of men are not won today by copy book maxims, or even by the sheer force of logic. A lie repeated often enough begins to be believed unless it is contradicted at least as often, especially if it has a shred of truth in it. Since the enemies of freedom are using every one of the modern means of mass communication, the friends of freedom must do so, too, or give up all hope of success.

Wanted: New Unitarian Techniques

This job cannot be done unless Unitarians generally awaken to the fact that we are living in 1953. The techniques of influencing thought and opinion that were adequate to the times a hundred years ago are as obsolete as the stagecoach. The conventional pulpit is a great solace to the saved, but it does not help liberal groups to reach the mass of people. Even publishing great books that have small circulation is not very effective. We are simply dreaming if we think that we can touch men's minds on a large scale without employing the modern means of mass communication. Not only must we use them but we must use them in a competitively effective way. It is a wonderful thing that in Indianapolis and in a few other cities radio is used to some extent. But the need of our times is for a much more ambitious program. To be successful, the exponents of freedom will have to revise their ideas of what is economically possible. But why should the American Unitarian Association not have, for example, a top quality news broadcast program, paid for at regular commercial rates if necessary, with the usual advertising time devoted to telling specifically about the necessity for public protection of a philosophy of freedom of thought and belief? Is not freedom worth as much to us as profits from sales are to Standard Oil?

I ask you, do you honestly believe that freedom of thought is safe in this country today? If you do please do not bother to listen to me further, because we dis-

agree on a factual assumption. But if you agree that there is a real threat to intellectual freedom, I urge you to give serious thought to my prescription for the disease. I see no way to cure it except by a large scale program of public enlightenment on the issues, conducted through the same mass media of communication which the would-be destroyers of our freedom are themselves using.

The American scene today needs such a revitalized free religious movement. It needs a reformulation of Unitarian philosophy in specific terms relevant to the real threats to intellectual freedom in this country in 1953. It needs equally a bold new program of mass media public enlightenment. The majority of Unitarians will, I feel confident, agree upon the necessity of intellectual freedom to the survival of the values they hold most dear. Many, however, will ask how such a large scale educational enterprise could possibly be financed. I feel sure that it will not be possible to finance it if we are timid. But our Association holds fairly large funds in trust for Unitarian advance. What better use could possibly be made of funds so earmarked? It would exhaust our capital, does someone say? Yes it might, but what is the use of an endowment for free religion if the conditions essential to its utilization are destroyed? And it seems very reasonable to expect that the fifty or more million Americans who do not want to see freedom destroyed might support a truly imaginative, effective, large-scale effort in a correspondingly large-scale way. To be sure, such an expenditure of capital would be a bold venture. It requires faith in the essential validity of democracy in a literate population to justify it. But do we not have confidence in the basic tenets of our society? Do we doubt that democracy can work? If we do have faith in the principles of democracy we should be willing to invest in its preservation, individually and organizationally.

Even more desirable than a program by Unitarians alone would perhaps be an attempt to bring about a united action on the part of all religious liberal groups to organize and conduct this effort. Could not the American Unitarian Association initiate a conference of such groups to explore the possibilities for a bold new program of utilization of the modern mass media to save civilized man from the monster he has created? That monster is mass media in the hands of unscrupulous agents. All of us, I think, recognize the dangers. Can we not unite to find the means to overcome them? This is our problem and our challenge.

The Western Conference has a new opportunity to help in the promotion of religious and intellectual freedom. It can, and I believe it should, take the lead in urging and helping American Unitarianism to initiate a program so bold as to capture the interest and the imagination of every person in the country who loves freedom, so effective as to expose the essential dishonesty of the McCarthys, the Father Walshes, and their fellow travelers, and so honest as to give a new hope for the survival of democratic freedom in a world which has all but lost its faith in the future. I should like to see this Conference urge the American Unitarian Association to explore the possibilities of, and if possible to implement immediately, a suitable program of mass media education of the public about the needs for, and the real dangers to, intellectual and religious freedom in America today. Let it not be said of us that we were willing to send our sons to die for freedom but that we were unwilling to work for it ourselves.

The One Thing Needful

FREDERICK MAY ELIOT

From the point of view of a religious liberal, the most disturbing phenomenon in the contemporary world is not the rising power of authoritarian reaction but the fact that there is no intelligently planned and vigorously supported opposition. The human values historically associated with the philosophy and faith of liberalism are today under attacks that threaten to destroy them, but they have no competently organized defenders. There are many signs that point toward the disintegration and collapse of the spiritual heritage of the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment, but there are few signs that modern liberals are capable of preventing such a catastrophe. If it occurs, it will be because those who ought to have withstood the assaults of the twentieth century barbarians have lost the battle by default.

Here and there, to be sure, individual voices are raised in protest; small and uncoördinated groups are trying at various points to block the advance of the forces of arbitrary power; but to any thoughtful observer it must be unmistakably clear that there is no overall strategy, no plan of campaign on a great scale, no systematic and resolute effort to unite those who accept the basic principles of liberalism into an effective instrument for the defense of civilization as we have known it for the last four hundred years.

The leaders of reaction are well aware of this situation. They are no longer afraid of liberalism, because they know its weakness and fully expect it to die the death of sterile futility in the not distant future. More than that, they have discovered that it is relatively easy to find disheartened liberals who can be bought by cheap promises, and be taught to deceive themselves into serving the purposes of tyranny while still talking about freedom. In the political arena, this manipulation of the weakness of many liberals has been exploited by both Fascists and Communists with tragic and devastating results; and while in the field of religion they have used more subtle methods, the outcome has been the same. The growth in numbers, prestige, and power among the churches that are essentially authoritarian in spirit and method has in recent years been amazing; but not less significant has been the steady infiltration of churches that once boasted of their liberalism by the mood and temper of an orthodoxy that is as rigid and uncompromising as any totalitarian system in the long story of religion in the past. Viewing the picture of organized religion as a whole, it is perfectly evident that today religious liberalism looks very much like a lost cause. That is the way it looks to the orthodox leaders, to the secular world, to all except a few among the religious liberals themselves.

But, however sombre the picture may be, it does not justify either cynicism or despair. On the contrary, this present situation is full of promise for religious liberalism, provided the lesson of the whole history of that movement is recognized and taken as the basis for the immediate future. The lesson is simple to state but exceedingly difficult to put into practice. What is required—the one thing needful—is to put our minds, our loyalties, and our will-power behind the task of organizing the forces of religious liberalism in an intelligent and vigorous fashion. If that can be done with reasonable speed, the present tightening-up of orthodox religion will inevitably provide the large number of new recruits to support and carry out the program which an intelligently organized liberalism will create. There will be a rebound from orthodoxy under the pressure from the leaders of reaction, and there will also be a rebound from the arid region of irreligious secularism, which is already showing signs of spiritual unrest under the terrific strains and pressures of the world today. A genuine liberalism, with an effective organization and a definite program, can take advantage of the very elements in the present situation that appear to spell its doom. This could be the moment in history when liberals will at long last come into their own.

If any such outcome is to become a realized fact and not merely a pious hope, liberals will have to do a very fast and a very thorough job of remaking themselves. They will have to make up their minds to throw aside their traditional distrust of all organization, which is in part the product of sad experience in the past but also—and in much larger part—a kind of spiritual poverty that has no justification in fact. Liberals have seldom been willing to come to terms with their own moral and spiritual inadequacies. They have fallen into the habit of being critical, negative, self-satisfied, arrogant, and censorious. They have enjoyed being different and have fallen into the trap of supposing that being different necessarily means being superior. They have resented the whole notion of discipline and have made a virtue of non-conformity for its own sake. They have nursed grievances and enjoyed harboring ancient grudges. Above all, they have forgotten that humility is the beginning of all wisdom.

These are handicaps that can be overcome, habits that can be shaken off, immaturities that can be outgrown. They can be, and they will have to be, if liberals are to measure up to their present opportunity. I see many indications that they will be; and I have a strengthening faith in the liberalism of today, and tomorrow, and the day after.

Church Committees—Liabilities or Assets*

RANDALL S. HILTON

In a discussion on "Why I Believe in Immortality" Shailer Matthews, then Dean of the Chicago Divinity School, stated that he had no desire to sit on a fleecy cloud and play a harp, that he was incapable of carrying a tune and thus would not be welcomed into the celestial choir. But he said "If they have some committees . . ." then he would be happy.

Probably the most typically American way of handling problems or projects is to appoint a committee. This is particularly true of Unitarian churches. Let somebody come up with a bright idea at a congregational meeting or a board meeting, and ninety-nine times out of a hundred the matter is referred to a committee. The committee then determines what shall be done. It is only rarely that the idea ever comes back to the congregation or Board to be considered on its merits. If such an idea does come back to the congregation or Board it is generally because it involves the expenditure of money not included in the purview of the budget. This being a universal habit pattern of our churches it should be clear that the committee structure of the church is one of primary significance and importance.

The committee system is the most democratic way of handling the multitudinous details of functioning institutions. Therefore it is logical and natural that as our churches grow in importance and their activities increase, more and more committees are established. But whether there are many committees, or only a few, whether they are standing committees established by the By-laws of the church or created by the Board, the question still remains as to whether these committees are liabilities or assets.

Committees, *per se*, are neither good, bad, nor indifferent. As to whether they will prove to be liabilities or assets depends on how they function. How they function will depend on many factors such as individual personalities, their temperaments, capabilities, and motives; organizational structure; the clarity or lack of clarity in defining the purposes and responsibilities of the committee; the coordination or lack of coordination of all of the committees; the presence or absence of a conscientiously planned program.

You no doubt have heard that the ideal committee is composed of three people with one member out of town, the second member at home sick in bed. This may be ideal for the third member if he wants to dominate or run the show; but it certainly short-circuits the basic democratic philosophy which underlies the real value of a functioning committee structure.

Committees as Liabilities

Now I want to discuss with you briefly some of the factors that may result in making a committee a liability.

First, it might be well to indicate when a committee is a liability. I would say that a committee is a liability when it creates friction, or when it fails to perform its duties, or when it is appointed as a means of avoiding the frank facing of a basic problem.

One of the most common situations resulting in the committee becoming a liability is the one where it has been appointed and given a name but has not been given any, or has been given an inadequate, description of the scope and limitations of its duties and responsibilities. This is not the fault of the committee in the first instance, but the fault of the responsible appointing body. However, if a committee is not clear in its own mind as to what it should or should not be doing then it is their duty to request the Board, or the appointing body, for a job description.

An example of what I mean is found in the case of the chairman of a house committee who came to me and asked me what authority he had, as chairman of

*A paper read at the "Workshop" sponsored by the Midwest Council of Religious Liberals, May 9, 1953.

the house committee, over the use of the organ. It seems that he had given permission for somebody to practice on the organ and had thereby involved himself in difficulties with the organist and the music committee. Now an organ is a musical instrument. In legal parlance, a chattel. It is not a building fixture. So I asked why he thought he had anything to say about it. Well, he had not been told he did not have any responsibility for it, and it was pretty well attached to the building, and so he just assumed the authority. On investigation I discovered that the organist assumed that he had control of the use of the organ, and also that the music committee assumed that it had control. The Board had never definitely determined who was really responsible.

Sometimes these situations would be really funny if the results were not so disastrous. Consider the two cases where there were misunderstandings between the hospitality and the social committees. In one case both committees assumed it was their responsibility to provide for the coffee hour. In the other case each committee assumed it was the responsibility of the other. In the first case a minor feud, if a feud can be a minor thing in a church, developed between the two chairmen which disturbed the harmonious functioning of the whole church for a time. In the second case the coffee hour "fell between the benches" and it took some time before the church succeeded in having one.

Failure to coördinate the work or plans of various committees can also lead to difficulties. Take the situation where the committee sponsoring the Girl Scouts set up a special program for a particular Friday night and the religious education committee planned a program for the senior department of the church school for the same night. Not only was there a problem of the use of the available facilities, but also charges and counter charges, implying bad faith, if not outright sabotage of each other's program.

Probably it could be claimed that the personalities involved in the above situations were the real cause of the tensions. However, if it had not been for the lack of planned coördination, or an inadequate job description, the occasions for conflict might not have arisen.

It is perfectly true that the best coördinating and describing of committees in the world will not guarantee efficient functioning. In the last analysis the personalities involved do determine this.

In one church I know of there was a man who was always harping, in season and out, on the fact that the church needed new members and why was not something done about it? He was made chairman of the membership committee. It sounds logical. But the gentleman's attitude toward practically everything in the church was not only highly critical, but negative. He would not bring anybody to church; and to ask anyone who came to join would be putting on pressure and he was opposed to pressuring people. In the committee meetings he complained about the sermons, the music, and what other committees were, or were not, doing. It would have been far better not to have had a membership committee.

After ten years in the parish ministry, and ten years of observing numerous churches, I could list a whole galaxy of misfit committee appointments which resulted in a committee being a liability, at least temporarily: the shy person on the hospitality committee, a marvelously friendly person when you knew him, but who would never take the initiative to speak to anyone, particularly a stranger; the neurotic who must dominate or he will not play ball. Of course, the most difficult things to get at are people's motives. People in churches seldom admit to ulterior motives, and often such motives are not discovered until after the damage has been done. That this kind of despicable and irreligious action, where one utilizes one's position to achieve personal desires rather than group goals, can happen in church organizations is most regrettable. Such a person makes any committee he so uses a liability.

I think I have given you enough examples of the causes which turn committees into liabilities to indicate the factors that need to be watched by responsible appointing bodies and by committee members who are genuinely interested in the progress and welfare of the church.

Committees as Assets

Now let us take a look at committees as assets. If the pitfalls above mentioned, or implied, are avoided, committees can be real and valuable assets to a church. It has been frequently stated that Unitarian churches should be laboratories of democracy, churches whose ministers and members are genuinely committed to the democratic process. As in a laboratory they should try to so control their experiments in committee functioning as to make sure that all the elements involved in a particular committee situation are of the very best. The nominating or appointing body will make a real effort to give to each committee an accurate description of its purpose and the scope and limitation of its responsibility, including its relationship to the total committee structure and the purpose of the church program. It will also make a thorough study of the church membership to determine the personal qualifications of each for committee effectiveness and responsibility. Committees created and guided with such care and consideration are not only likely to perform their functions well but will add even other values to the total church program. The well-described, well-selected, well-led and well-functioning committee is a genuine asset. It becomes the most democratic and most effective means of giving to members, both old and new, an opportunity for genuine and constructive self-expression, and for integrating them into the church. Intelligent discussion, conscientious decisions, cooperative effort, sharing the work: these are the prerequisites for developing that mutual understanding which is essential to fellowship.

Many times, no doubt, you have read this line in one of your services, "Fellowship is heaven, the lack of fellowship is hell." There is your test as to whether your committee is a liability or an asset—does it perform its function, fulfill its purpose, and at the same time contribute to fellowship?

Conclusion

These workshops today are dealing with the aims and purposes, methods and techniques of various church committees. Out of them we hope will arise a keener awareness of the importance and significance of the role that committees play in the church. We hope there will develop a dedication to the disciplines of democratic functioning. We hope there will be a genuine realization of the relevance of intelligently planned procedures. We hope that this is only the beginning of a series of organizational orientation and leadership training workshops. It is important that people be willing to serve in capacities as they are needed, or wanted. But it is equally, if not more, important that we learn to do the things we are willing to do in the most constructive way.

A Salute to "Mr. Western Conference"

GUEST EDITORIAL

It was by a sort of kindly ruse that Curtis W. Reese was "relieved" of editorial responsibility for the present issue of UNITY. By a vote of the Western Conference Board, the new President was asked to exercise his best judgment in finding a proper medium for the distribution of Prof. Maurice Visscher's splendid and challenging address at Indianapolis, and for Pres. Frederick May Eliot's supplementary statement. Almost immediately our thoughts turned to UNITY; but having received permission to use it as our vehicle, it was our further thought to let it convey our all-out expression of affection and esteem for UNITY's editor, who, after forty continuous years of service to and active leadership in Western Conference Unitarianism, has retired from the Presidency—without in any other sense retiring, inasmuch as he remains Dean of Abraham Lincoln Centre.

Thus it has come about that for this one issue of his own journal, Mr. Western Conference, himself, is on the sidelines though we did "permit" him the accustomed space for one of his challenging editorials. And we salute him—the man who has been identified with our Western brand of Unitarianism continuously and intensively for a span of forty years, and whom Dr. Raymond B. Bragg acclaims as the outstanding leader of the last 35-year span of Western Conference history.

How can we properly characterize the essential contribution to liberal religion which we identify in our minds with Curtis Reese? *Who's Who* lists a bewildering variety of activities, to most of which he gave administrative leadership; and repeatedly he has impressed us with his unexcelled parliamentary aptitude and skill. Nor is this a mean achievement, for the men who can calmly and decisively guide highly organized groups through difficult parliamentary sessions are rare. Dr. Reese has done this times without number, and under all kinds of trying circumstances. As far back as 1919 he was chairman of a board which arbitrated a railway strike in Des Moines; he was the first State Housing Commissioner of Iowa; he has presided over civil rights groups, and educational groups, and religious groups. He was long an active leader in the Chicago League for Industrial Democracy; he has been on almost every important board in our Unitarian denomination; he has participated in innumerable councils; and he has left his mark on almost every aspect of our work, both in the Western Conference and in the American Unitarian Association.

Curtis Reese's involvement in and leadership of extra-denominational activities have been as frequent and as effective as in denominational affairs; and always his philosophy and his philosophy of human relations have overlapped and merged. For him, "faith and faith's goals are one." As administrator of denominational affairs he has always been involved in intricate problems of planning and direction; and during most of his years with the Western Conference it was essential that he become expert in investment and budgetary problems. Significant, however, in the midst of such a record is the fact that Curtis Reese never ceased to be the preacher and the scholar. He was an active parish minister for only eleven years; and relatively few ministers now serving churches remember him in that role. Nevertheless, there is never a moment when one can think of Curtis Reese as anything but a Unitarian minister, currently assigned to non-parish work. Indeed, he is a minister of ministers, a liberal among liberals, and a leader in progressive philosophical thinking as applied to religious problems. It is a common assumption that when there is an important occasion, and a call for clear and decisive utterance, Curtis Reese will not let us down. Always he speaks the challenging and commanding word.

Preacher, author, administrator, humanist, naturalist, philosopher—that is Curtis Reese. As we honor and salute him for the distinctiveness and magnitude of his service, we urge him to continue, in such ways as will always be open to him, to give us his wise counsel and his irreplaceable leadership.

Edwin T. Buehrer.

Tributes to Curtis W. Reese

HE CAN "NEVER RETIRE FROM OUR HEARTS"

By Randall S. Hilton

Retiring from office this year is the President, Curtis W. Reese, who has been president of the Conference for fourteen years. Prior to that he served the Conference as a part-time executive, as a board member, and as Executive Secretary for ten and one-half years. His imprint is indelibly stamped upon the Western Conference. His daring thought has challenged all of us. His administrative skill is unsurpassed. His shrewd business and investment acumen saved the Conference from bankruptcy and placed it on a sound financial basis. I can assure Curtis Reese that the people of the Western Unitarian Conference, while permitting him to retire as President, will not permit him to retire from their hearts or from their councils. He can look back with true satisfaction, and look ahead with the confidence that his successor will carry on the traditions of progress and pioneering. I know I express for the Conference its appreciation and thanks.

THE STATESMANSHIP OF CURTIS W. REESE

By Charles H. Lyttle

I am glad indeed to be granted this opportunity of reminding our circle of friends of Curtis Reese's many and important contributions to our Western Conference and to American Unitarianism in general. I believe I am correct in stating that not more than a half dozen men in the century and a half of our denominational organization in this country have had such various and distinguished responsibilities laid upon them not only of an administrative nature but educational and humanitarian as well. To all these offices and obligations he has given unsparingly of a versatility of gifts rarely found in conjunction with philosophic tastes and interests. As minister of two of our churches, as Secretary of the Conference from 1919 to 1930, as Mid-Western Regional Vice-President of the American Unitarian Association, as President of the Conference from 1939 to 1953, he has served before the mast, at the helm, on the bridge—and even in the boiler rooms when neces-

sary—for almost half of the hundred and one years of our Conference history. I believe that thus far in American Unitarian history only one other man—Samuel A. Eliot—had a comparable record. Had I not had Dr. Reese's long experience and excellent memory to assist me when writing *Freedom Moves West,* I would have had to do much more research and would have made many more errors than I did.

I think I appreciate the significance of Dr. Reese's services to our Conference the better because I knew it some years before he entered it as minister in Alton. Perhaps I should say, I have the deeper realization of all he has done for our Conference, especially during his dynamic secretaryship of eleven years, because I knew the Conference for what it *was* and was *not* before that electrical period. As a student in Old Meadville from 1908 to 1910, about the only hint I gained that the Conference even existed was through the annual visits of its Secretaries—our beloved Wilson M. Backus among them—to the School to "size up" the seniors. Even then, my awareness of the Conference was limited to a vague suspicion that west of Cleveland, my home town, there were a few small, struggling churches to which, on graduation, I might be recommended if I had not demonstrated my possession of sufficient literary ability and social polish to warrant my candidating in New Hampshire or Maine. Though my major interest was church history, I never heard or learned a thing about the valiant struggle for freedom waged by Jenkin Lloyd Jones and his Ethical Basis comrades; nor of those gallant pioneers in the West, W. G. Eliot, J. H. Heywood, Robert Collyer, the Iowa Sisterhood of ministers. The theological and cultural affinities of the School were with Eastern Unitarianism; indeed, all the faculty had their summer retreats and family burying plots in New England.

How greatly the situation has changed! Not only is the School now located in Chicago, but twice as many churches are in existence between Meadville, Pennsylvania, and the Mississippi River as in my student days. New churches in Youngstown, Dayton, Columbus, Fort Wayne, South Bend; seconds in Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cincinnati, Louisville; thirds in Cleveland and six in Chicago instead of the languishing four of 1919. And every month seems to bring tidings of another of those promising Fellowship Units, springing up like crocuses all over our Western field! Elsewhere in the world Free Religion appears to be losing ground; in our country it is thriving and growing as never before. We are confident of our message and our mission as never before; we have developed organizational efficiency unprecedented in the history of liberal religion.

Many factors, personal and impersonal, have conspired to bring this to pass; but as I look back over the forty years since I entered Meadville School, I envisage the Secretaryship of Curtis Reese from 1919 to 1930 as the February thaw that started sap to running and buds to opening. When he became Secretary, almost a third of our pulpits were vacant and, owing perhaps to the post-war recession, the founding of new churches was virtually at a standstill. Curtis Reese got salaries raised, pulpits filled, enthusiasm renascent. He added diplomacy and strategy to Morton D. Hull's visions and dollars to get the Meadville School moved to Chicago and the First Church revitalized. He brought Preston Bradley and the Peoples Church into the Conference, as well as those at Cedar Rapids, St. John's in Cincinnati, and Clifton in Louisville. He supported the emergent Humanist movement frankly and fearlessly but without iconoclasm and institutional disruption, with the result that he won the trust and cooperation of the Eastern conservatives—an admirable policy which has been ably continued by his Humanist successors in the office, Raymond Bragg, Lon Call and Randall Hilton. Without such statesmanship the Humanist movement might have caused another such unhappy denominational rift as occurred in 1886. Of prime consequnce, perhaps, was the fact that one of our Conference directors, Frederick Eliot, had the hearty support of our Conference, including its Humanist members, for his election to the Presidency of the Association in 1937 and thus began, under harmonious auspices, the new era of efficiency and expansion in which we rejoice today.

With pardonable romanticism our historians are prone to claim for Unitarianism, throughout its history, fidelity to "complete mental freedom, the unrestricted use of reason, generous tolerance of differing religious views and usages." The fact is, however, that the closest approximation to such fidelity has occurred in our Western Conference since 1875. In spite of his Humanist convictions which, from a certain point of view, have cost him dear, Curtis Reese has maintained with resolute tolerance and magnanimity, to the full extent of his influence and example, the unique and prophetic principles of our Conference: Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion.

THE "DOMINANT FIGURE" OF OUR CONFERENCE

By Raymond B. Bragg

I cannot be greatly impressed, let me say in frankness, with the reported retirement of Curtis Reese from the Presidency of the Western Conference. If he were to repudiate all that the Conference has been, and return to the church of his fathers, or if he should retract any one of the major positions he has put forward, then many of us would be bereft. But I hear nothing so dire and I would seek confirmation if I did. Curtis Reese can no more retire from the Western Conference than can Abraham Lincoln be subtracted from the history of the Republic. If he insists on quitting the office, we will have to let him. That, however, is a different matter.

This annual meeting is listed as the 101st. While I am mildly hesitant about bringing it up, the processes of history require it: Curtis Reese has been the dominant figure of the Conference for more than one-third of that august span. Notwithstanding the preëminence of Jenkin Lloyd Jones, I would contend that in the entire history Curtis Reese has been the outstanding figure. During his Secretaryship, the Conference not only expanded its influence; its substance was expanded as well. The ten-and-one-half-year Secretaryship from 1919 to 1930 gave renewed character to the name and nature of Unitarianism in the area. The record established still endures quantitatively. Qualitatively it not only endures but, in the language of the learned, subsists.

His Presidency is fresh in all our minds. In fact, some have said, as it was said of another, "I cannot remember when he wasn't President." That he was willing to serve has been good fortune for us all. Here is a man who believes in freedom, who protects it for all, and who practices its method. If I understand the spirit of the man it is not far removed from just this: to live is to think, to dream, to plan, to act. Everywhere he has been—and where has he not been in this Uni-

tarian scene of ours?—his imprint has been found.

The institutions bearing our name are representative of that name. In them the ways are open into far places. His leadership has unfailingly pointed the true direction.

I trust he realizes the regard in which he is held, and in what honor he is esteemed. To point out the qualities of statesmanship is not necessary in this context. Those of us who have known Curtis Reese over the years and have worked with him need no reminder of what constitutes this collective virtue. Some will recall the Meadville commencement of 1927 when the then Secretary of the Conference received the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. The late President Southworth hailed him as a radical who had maintained the confidence of conservatives. That is a more difficult achievement in 1953 than it was twenty-six years ago, but the citation then made has lost none of its pertinence. While maintaining his own position with ardor he has served the total movement. May we all aspire to that accolade.

Could I be with you on the evening of May 2, these remarks would have been amplified, and personal reminiscences would have been called to the attention of each and all. Having failed that opportunity I submit, that, in ways we all understand, Curtis Reese is Mr. Western Conference.

"BEYOND ALL ELSE . . . THE MAN HIMSELF"

By E. Burdette Backus

It is now nearly forty years ago since I met at a Western Unitarian Conference Annual Meeting a young man who had but recently come to us from the Baptist ministry. Curtis Reese was then serving our church in Alton. There began for me one of the friendships which have been among the chief rewards of my years as a Unitarian minister.

We Unitarian ministers are doomed to be somewhat lonely in our own communities as far as professional fellowship is concerned, and hence have to look to our brother Unitarian ministers in other communities to satisfy this need. It has been a great source of strength and comfort to me across the years to know that Curtis Reese was in Alton, in Des Moines, in Chicago.

The personal meetings were not as frequent as I should have desired, for distance prevented, especially when I strayed from the Western Conference and went out to the Pacific Coast. But even at such distance it fortified my soul to know that there was another human being so essentially akin to myself. I remember writing him, on the occasion of the publication of one of his books, that he had expressed my own convictions as nearly as one man can do for another.

We have not always agreed in judgments but I have known that he respected me in our disagreement, even as I respected him. I have frequently turned to him for counsel. The relationship has on my part given me insight into the feeling which lay behind the Biblical statement that "Jonathan loved David as his own soul."

It is against this personal background that I should like to ask this Conference to go on record as expressing its profound appreciation of the mighty service Curtis Reese has rendered it. He has today yielded the Presidency to another, and a worthy man. It does not mean that his services to us are ended, for I am sure that, wherever he is, whatever he is doing, he will continue as a great source of strength to our common cause. The course of a lifetime is not to be altered by a surrender of office.

Curtis Reese has served us as minister in Alton, in Des Moines, in Chicago. He has served us in two separate periods, covering thirteen years, as Executive Secretary of the Conference. As Dean of Abraham Lincoln Centre and in his numerous civic activities, he has served us by revealing our religion in action; and now he has completed his years as President of the Conference. Simply to enumerate these items is but expressing hollow words. It is for you to fill them out, give them substance out of your own knowledge, out of your own affection for him.

He has been and is a pioneer, a prophet, of the most progressive religion of our day. He has been a remarkably effective executive. He has shown consummate skill in that most difficult art of working effectively with small groups of intensely individualistic men and women. I sat with him for some eight years on the Board of the American Unitarian Association and marveled at the adroitness with which he managed to give direction to our deliberations. We would get ourselves involved in the usual tangles of such bodies, and then Curtis Reese would come out with a concise statement which by its clarity and cogency made us aware of what it was we were groping after. He is the most skilled committee man of my experience.

Beyond and above all the particular services he has rendered is the man himself. We honor him for his abilities, for his integrity, his loyalty, and for the splendid stature of his manhood. I therefore propose that as a feeble and inadequate expression of the esteem, the gratitude, the affection in which we hold him we rise in salute to him and that a record of our action be inscribed in the minutes of this 101st Annual Meeting of the Western Unitarian Conference.

"HAD CHAUCER ONLY KNOWN C. W. R."

By Ralph E. Bailey

Probably no minister in this Conference has known Curtis Reese so long as I; certainly no minister in this Conference could admire and love him more. I found for a while that the longer I knew him the more I admired and loved him; and then, before many years had passed, I reached the very ultimate of affectionate esteem. Curtis is and has been at the top in my warmest regards.

In 1908, he and I became students at the Baptist seminary in Louisville, where I soon shocked him to his knees by my heresy. Much of his time was devoted, I think, to prayers that I be corrected in my outspoken apostasy from Baptist truth. In the Unitarian scene, the parts have been reversed; and in matters of theology I cling to the old while I breathlessly watch Curtis Reese go along with the new. However, neither Theism nor Humanism, nor any other creature, can stop me from adoring him.

It is impossible to appraise Curtis Reese without listing more talents and accomplishments than there is room for in a short impression. He is like Leonardo, as to multitude of differing achievements; like Thomas Jefferson, as to varied range of proficiency and skill. He fulfills that conception of genius which means ability to do together a large number of diverse things, and to do all of the compound well.

All of us are proud of Curtis Reese. We are proud of what he did in Iowa, where as a pastor he brought into being needed and important state laws. We are proud of him as a writer—author of excellent books, editor having a deserved high rank. We are proud of him as a preacher, the thoughtful source of sermons

classed as epochal and great. We are proud of him as a theologian—his significance in the field of divinity being widely known. We are proud of him as a churchman—his leadership in ecclesiastical matters always proving wise and prophetic. We are proud of him as a servant of mankind—one who seeks not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life that people may be blessed. He has been and is our pride.

I could wish that Chaucer might have known Curtis Reese. *The Canterbury Tales* would have been different. Among the persons of the poem would have been a general ecclesiastic who would have won the world. The "parson of the town" would have found that man central in his life. He would have been the local parson's security, he would have been the local parson's confessor; he would have been the local parson's inspiration; he would have been the local parson's friend. All this would have been, if Chaucer had known Curtis Reese!

Curtis has been with us in this Conference for all these years, and with us he still is. Gratefully we hail him; and we wish him to know that our tents are pitched with his forever.

Unitarian Affairs Committee

RANDALL S. HILTON

A committee on Unitarian Affairs can be, and should be, one of the most important and significant committees of a church or fellowship. When it is effective it contributes to the morale of the whole organization by intensifying interest in the local group, broadening the outlook of its members, and increasing the participation of all in the total liberal movement. Building a "United World Community" must begin with overcoming isolationism at home. Likewise Unitarian advance depends on stimulating an awareness of the relatedness of the local church or fellowship to the area, regional, and national organizations. Basically this is a problem of communication.

In the first place the committee should be composed of persons sufficiently interested in the Unitarian movement as such to inform themselves on what is happening and how it happens. It also should have on it persons who are intrigued by finding ways and means of communication and of "getting across" this information to the whole group. Here are some suggestions which may be helpful to a denominational affairs committee.

1. Establish some regular, therefore expected, channel of communication. The use of a designated portion of the weekly calendar, a monthly newsletter, or bulletin board, are some of the means that have been used successfully.

2. Plan occasional special or unexpected channels of communication. The special meeting for a denominational representative, a panel or forum on either a general or specific Unitarian project, the writing and presentation of a play based on Unitariana, a social event with Unitarian quiz games, are a few of the means by which this can be done.

3. Plan and outline the communication program so that during the year a constant and comprehensive presentation of information will be made. Hit or miss presentation may provide information but it contributes little to understanding. The goal is an informed people who understand what they know.

There are many Unitarian organizations and activities. Something is always going on. An alert committee will never be short of material. Here are some of the areas which should be covered.

1. The Council of Liberal Churches (Unitarian-Universalist). The historical background leading up to the consummation of this federal union is a fascinating study. Who belongs to it, how does it plan to operate, how is it operating? Who is on the Council?

2. The American Unitarian Association. This major organization provides many services. What, why, where, when, and how?

3. The United Unitarian Appeal. What is it? How is its money raised and allocated? Who belongs to it? Who controls it?

4. There are many independent and autonomous organizations in the Unitarian community. Some of them provide general services, some specific services. What are these organizations, and which ones are general and which specific?

5. The Western Unitarian Conference. This is your regional organization. It is one of seven. What is its relationship to the American Unitarian Association, the United Unitarian Appeal, other continental organizations and the local church? Is it an independent or subsidiary organization? How is it managed? Who are its officers and board members? What services and activities does it provide or sponsor? When and where will it meet? Who in your group has attended its meetings or served on its board or committees?

6. The Area Conferences. There are seven area or sub-regional organizations in the Western Unitarian Conference. What are their names? What activities do they provide? To which one does your church or fellowship belong? Who from your church participates in its management?

7. The Midwest Unitarian Summer Assembly. What is its popular name? Why? How is it financed, how managed? How does it compare with other summer assemblies in size, composition, and program? When does it meet? What has it contributed to your church? Who from your church has attended?

8. The Unitarian Service Committee. What is its record? How is it financed? What are its plans?

The sources for obtaining this information are inexhaustible. One exceptional, interesting, and valuable resource is *Freedom Moves West,* a history of the Western Unitarian Conference from 1852 to 1952.

Needless to say, an adequate job of communication which creates interest and understanding should be followed up with plans to secure attendance at national, regional, and area meetings, the stimulation of desire to participate in inspirational and training conferences. It is this increasing participation that will improve the morale of a church or fellowship. It will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of local committees, departments, and affiliated groups. An effective Unitarian or Denominational Affairs Committee is invaluable. Your church, or your fellowship, should have one.

Western Unitarian Conference

700 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago 15, Illinois

RANDALL S. HILTON, Executive Secretary

NEWS NOTES

(Information based on questionnaire sent out several weeks ago. When questionnaire has not been returned, the 1953-54 Year Book has been used.)

Colorado: *Boulder Fellowship* (the first Fellowship in the country)—Mrs. J. H. Rush, chairman—has a booming church school with an enrollment of 49 and an average attendance of 38. *Colorado Springs*—Hurley Begun, minister; Otto F. Goeke, chairman—has a very "homey" newsletter which includes each week a superlative nature description written by Begun. *Denver*—Rudolph W. Gilbert, minister; Mrs. Elizabeth H. Pesman, secretary—has taken steps to sell their present building and build in a new location. *Fort Collins*—Harold H. Wright, minister; Dr. N. E. Howe, chairman—with a membership of 250 has an average attendance at church of 100 and a church school enrollment of over 100.

Illinois: *Alton*—Zoltan Nagy, minister; Dudley F. Giberson, chairman—has remodeled its parish hall and redecorated the auditorium. *Bloomington*—Kenneth C. Walker, minister; Lyle Busick, chairman—made over $2,000 on the Fall Bazaar and permitted the Episcopalians to hold their bazaar in the Unitarian Vestry the following week. *Carbondale Fellowship*—Emmett T. Harris, chairman—is renting space in a school this year for their meetings. A church school was started October 18. *Chicago, Beverly*—John M. Hogan, chairman—has called Vincent Silliman of Hollis, L. I., to be its minister. He will begin on February 1. *Chicago, First*—Leslie T. Pennington, minister; Richard J. Stevens, chairman—has purchased the Hilton House, next door, for its education building, and employed Mrs. G. Richard Kuch as Director of Religious Education. *Chicago, Free Religious Fellowship*—Sylvestre Watkins, chairman—is without a minister since the resignation of Lewis McGee. They have been having a series of speakers and coffee hour discussions. *Chicago, People's Church*—Preston Bradley, minister; H. B. Hunter, chairman—has an average Sunday morning attendance of over 1,000. Evening services are held also through Easter. *Chicago, Third*—Edwin T. Buehrer, minister; Bernard Heinrich, chairman—celebrated its 85th anniversary during November and plans to expand its facilities. S.R.O. conditions both at church services and in the church school necessitate this. *Chicago, Unity*—Rev. John R. Heyworth, minister; Gordon H. Gannett, clerk—supports the minister's community activities in the Lake View Council. *Decatur Fellowship*—Ralph E. C. Fredrickson, chairman—recently had Preston Bradley speak. *Evanston*—Homer A. Jack, minister; Mrs. Malcolm Knowles, secretary—conducted a capital fund campaign for the purpose of enlarging their facilities. A series of three forums on the Kinsey Report were held during November. *Geneseo*—George B. Dedrick, chairman; Phineas Morrow, secretary—is in the process of liquidation. So far they have contributed $5,650 to the endowment funds of the Western Unitarian Conference. *Geneva*—Charles H. Lyttle, minister; Richard L. Cooper, chairman—has spent some $10,000 during the past three years in refurbishing and enlarging their historic building. *Hinsdale*—Sunder Joshi, minister; R. D. Jessup, chairman—is growing rapidly and is unique in that it has a larger average attendance at church than its membership. *LaGrange Fellowship*—Manley H. Jones, chairman—holds regular discussion meetings and cooperates with both Hinsdale and Chicago, Third churches. *Moline*—Alphons Rochow, secretary—has discontinued regular services. *North Shore Fellowship*—Foster Hannaford, Jr., chairman—meets weekly at the Town Hall in Deerfield, Illinois. *Park Forest*—Ivan Baker, Sr., chairman—is sponsoring an art and foreign film program. *Quincy*—Thomas J. Maloney, minister; Mrs. Floyd W. Marshall, secretary—has installed a new high fidelity recording and amplifying system. *Rockford*—Jack Mendelsohn, Jr., minister; Addison Brown, chairman—had pictures of the church school in the November issue of *Graphic*, a magazine for Rockford, along with those of the symphony and T.V. stars. *Shelbyville*—Mrs. Claude Stokes, secretary—is having visiting speakers, a regular church school program, and is always well represented at area meetings. *Springfield Fellowship* (the 100th Fellowship)—Gerry Allard, chairman—carries out the interracial policy of Unitarianism and a thoroughly liberal program for adults and children in the capital city. *Urbana*—Arnold F. Westwood, minister; David H. Swann, chairman—is conducting two services on Sunday morning, including two church school services, one for the lower and the other for the upper grades.

Indiana: *Bloomington Fellowship*—Byrum E. Carter, chairman—is raising funds to rent or purchase a permanent headquarters and meeting place. *Evansville Fellowship*—Robert Wells, chairman— continues a vital program with occasional discussions on controversial subjects. *Fort Wayne*—John Fordon, minister; Mrs. Elizabeth H. Reed, chairman—has completely remodelled and redecorated its facilities for church and school. *Hobart*—Orson N. Moore, minister; Chester Spivey, chairman—is adding an education wing to the church. *Indianapolis, All Souls*—E. Burdette Backus, minister; Gordon W. Batman, chairman—has called Jack Mendelsohn, Jr., as of January 1st to succeed Dr. Backus who retires at that time after forty-one years in the ministry and fifteen years as minister of All Souls. He will be greatly missed in the Conference. *Indianapolis, North Church*—John K. Hammon, minister; Victor R. Jose, Jr., chairman—is replacing the Ligon System with the Beacon Course in the church school. A building fund has been established. *South Bend*—Erwin A. Gaede, minister; Rowland L. Sylvester, chairman—has an active church and radio program and the Bahai assembly meets here on Saturday nights. *West Lafayette Fellowship*—Aldric J. Smith, chairman—holds bi-weekly Sunday morning services and a weekly church school. They plan to form a college group soon. *Rushville Fellowship* (our newest Fellowship)—Robert Waggener, chairman—was organized November 1. It meets at the Durbin Hotel.

Iowa: *Ames Fellowship*—Geoffrey Shepherd, chairman—holds weekly seminar discussions led by members. There is an active church school and youth group. *Burlington Fellowship*—Sterling Lord, chairman—has now completed remodelling a portion of the second

floor of the Meeting House for church school purposes. *Cedar Falls Fellowship*—Mrs. Frieda Herman, chairman—has interesting programs of talks by members, followed by discussions. *Cedar Rapids* — Waldemar Argow, minister; Vernon E. Lichtenstein, chairman—was host to the Iowa Nebraska Conference in October. *Davenport* — Bertram Metcalf, chairman — has been having guest speakers while seeking a new minister. A Bible question is a feature in the weekly bulletin. *Des Moines*—Charles W. Phillips, minister; Oval Quist, chairman—has recently redecorated the church auditorium, thereby greatly enhancing the attractiveness and atmosphere of the worship service. The parsonage master bedroom was pictured in the October *Better Homes and Gardens*. *Iowa City*—Alfred J. N. Henriksen, minister; Wayne Vasey, chairman—has had a 30 per cent increase in church attendance this fall. The church school is taxing all the available facilities. *Sioux City*—John W. Brigham, minister; Warren S. Kane, chairman—is purchasing a new property for its headquarters and meetings. It has sufficient ground for expansion.

Kansas: *Topeka Fellowship* — Stanley R. Roose, chairman — meets alternate Sundays in the Walnut Room of the Hotel Kansan. Among the outside speakers heard recently were William Hammond, Marco Morrow, and Raymond Bragg.

Kentucky: *Lexington Fellowship* — Richard Blanton, chairman—conducts church school and discussion programs. It is now engaged in rewriting their By-laws. *Louisville, Clifton*—G. Theodore Hempelmann, minister; Mrs. L. M. Bloodworth, secretary—observed the 50th anniversary this year of the founding of the church and the ordination of the minister. *Louisville, First*—Robert T. Weston, minister; Donald Stout, assistant minister; Robert Paul, chairman—has begun a radio program over station WGRC. *Paducah Fellowship*—Henry L. Press, Jr., chairman—conducted summer programs under the leadership of Donald Stout.

Michigan: *Ann Arbor*—Edward Redman, minister; Mrs. Edward S. Bordin, chairman—is conducting a capital fund drive to build a chapel. *Birmingham Fellowship*—Russell Lincoln, minister; M. W. Newcomb, chairman—expects to become a church in the near future. *Detroit, Central*—Tracy M. Pullman, minister; Howard Heis, moderator—has employed Miss Constance Young as Director of Religious Education. *East Lansing Fellowship*—Mrs. Henry Dykema, chairman—has a widely varied program and monthly "family nights." *Detroit, Northwest*—Frank D. Gentile, minister; Elmer McDaid, moderator—was organized as a Unitarian-Universalist church this year and is the newest church in the Conference. *Flint*—John H. Morgan, minister; Ronald O. Warner, chairman—is having an interesting sermon series on "How To Be Happy Though Conscious." *Grosse Pointe*—William D. Hammond, minister; Mrs. Margaret Silverman, secretary—conducted a "Holly Fair" November 13. *Jackson*—James I. Dirlam, chairman—Mr. Dirlam is up and around after a long illness. *Kalamazoo*—Edwin C. Palmer, minister; Newton F. Lincoln, chairman—maintains a complete, modern workshop for the use of the men of the church.

Minnesota: *Angora*—John Kortes, clerk—now has Kenneth Smith preaching once a month. *Duluth*—Kenneth J. Smith, minister, Harold Stueland, chairman—is making steady progress. Received their largest number of new members this year. *Fergus Falls Fellowship* (organized last year)—Stuart E. Atkinson, chairman—has had philosophic discussions and tape-recorded sermons. They are planning a church school program. *Hanska*—P. J. Hanson, minister; Anton A. Bakken, chairman—spent nearly $6,000 in remodelling. They are now changing their fiscal year so that it corresponds with the calendar year. *Mankato Fellowship*—G. S. Petterson, chairman—was organized last spring with 32 members and a church school. *Minneapolis*—Carl A. Storm, minister; Wyman Smith, chairman—has purchased the lot next to their new building. *St. Paul*—Arthur Foote, minister; William L. West, Jr., chairman—entertained the Minnesota Conference in October; is using group methods in many of its committees and district meetings. *Underwood*—Ray Ewing, minister; Alfred Gronner, chairman—federated some time ago with two Congregational parishes to form a "larger parish" to jointly share a minister. *Virginia*—Kenneth J. Smith, minister; Leroy Johnson, chairman—shares the ministry of Mr. Smith with Duluth on a 40-60 basis. *Willmar*—Peter Molenaar, chairman—conducts a summer camp for its young people; has visiting speakers; and sponsors a weekly broadcast by John Brigham.

Missouri: *Columbia Fellowship*—Philip C. Stone, chairman—holds regular Sunday morning services with a speaker. *Kansas City*—Raymond B. Bragg, minister; H. Roswell Wahl, clerk—holds services in the auditorium of the Art Institute and has a parish house across the street for its offices and education program. Plans for building are under consideration. *St. Louis*—Thaddeus B. Clark, minister; Christopher Moore, associate minister; Ralph Hunsche, chairman—conducted a fascinating experiment of "church in the round." The congregation created its own worship service.

Nebraska: *Lincoln* — Isaiah J. Domas, minister; Lawrence B. Webster, Jr., chairman—recently entertained the Oxford (England) Debating Team and sponsored its debate with the University of Nebraska. *Omaha* — John W. Cyrus, minister; Mrs. Kenneth Helms, secretary—celebrated the 10th anniversary of Mr. Cyrus' ministry.

North Dakota: *Bismarck Fellowship*—G. Wendell Smith, chairman—has a church school; uses recorded sermons and discussions at its meetings. *Fargo Fellowship*—A. W. Doeling, chairman—concentrates on discussions. *Jamestown Fellowship* — Reinhold Nathan, chairman — was the first Unitarian organization in North Dakota in many years.

Ohio: *Cincinnati, First*—Ellsworth M. Smith, minister; James Percival, chairman—puts out a highly informative newsletter. The minister's chatty page is titled "The Three Minute Call." *Cincinnati, St. John's*—Julius F. Krolfifer, minister; Calvin Osborne, chairman—is a vital institution as a result of the improved health of the minister, the new building, and the growing program. *Dayton*—L. Wendell Hughes, minister; Charles F. VanDine, chairman — entertained the Ohio Valley Conference October 25. *Springfield Fellowship*—Bruce Ambrose, chairman—has on occasions had Edwin H. Wilson and Wendell Hughes speak. *Toledo*—Arthur W. Olsen, minister; Mrs. Donald W. Miller, secretary—put on an all-church steak dinner for $1.00 on November 17—"believe it or not!" *Urbana Fellowship*—William M. Gillie and Charles English, co-chairmen—has taken leadership in the community on matters interracial. Recently they visited the Dayton church.

South Dakota: *Sioux Falls (Minnehaha County Fellowship)*—Earl G. Miller, chairman—is at the present time inactive.

Wisconsin: *Eau Claire (Chippewa Valley Fellowship)*—Lawrence Johnson, chairman—uses occasional films and its own members as discussion leaders. *Green Bay Fellowship*—R. F. Steele, chairman—holds Sunday evening meetings. *Kenosha Fellowship*—Charles E. Berteau, chairman — meets weekly, with outside speakers twice a month. *LaCrosse Fellowship*—Alan Christensen, chairman—has spent several meetings getting acquainted with Unitarianism and each other. *Madison*—Max D. Gaebler, minister; Horace A. Page, chairman—staged a "Political Party," bringing to life figures from our political past. *Milwaukee*—Ralph E. Bailey, minister; F. W. Krueger, secretary—reports a steady increase in church attendance.

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LOST — STRAYED — MISLAID?

1 copy—*Songs & Services*, by Jacob Trapp
1 copy—*Great Companions*, Vol. II

These belong to Randall S. Hilton; please return to Conference Office.

"There is a spirit in the Western Unitarian Conference that I have not found equalled in any other area. It is hard to describe because things of the spirit are more felt than thought. However, it expresses itself in two basic attitudes, that of the pioneer, and that of fellowship. The pioneer is experimental. The Western Conference has always been willing to experiment with methods, with techniques, and ideas. There have been, and are, differences of opinion. But they have never been permitted to permanently mar or disrupt our fundamental feeling of fellowship. The deliberations and activities of the Conference have been blessed by the predominant presence of mutual respect and sympathetic understanding. In trying to capture in a phrase the significance of these attitudes of pioneering and fellowship, the spirit of the Western Unitarian Conference, I would put it in two words, 'progressive empathy,' to go forward with understanding. This is our heritage, our tradition, and our reason for being. Let us keep it so."

—From the Secretary's Report, 101st Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, Indiana, May 2, 1953.